

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15
CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 DODE-00 ACDA-12 EB-08
TRSE-00 OMB-01 AGRE-00 COME-00 LAB-04 SIL-01 /088 W
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R 050030Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3236
INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY SUVA
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
USLO PEKING
HICOMTERPACIS
CINCPAC HONOLULU

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT MORESBY 0647

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PGOV, SPOP, ELAB, BP
SUBJECT: SOLOMON ISLANDS INTELLIGENCE BRIEF

1. SUMMARY: HIGHLIGHTS OF SOLOMON ISLANDS INTELLIGENCE
SUMMARY FOR MARCH PASSED TO US BY BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION,
FOLLOW. GENERATING GREATEST INTEREST WAS VISIT OF TWO
PRC DIPLOMATS WHO MET WITH GSI MINISTERS AND PLANNED VISIT
OF NEWLY-APPOINTED MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND LANDS TO CHINA.
LABOUR AND SECESSIONIST MOVEMENTS SHOWED LITTLE CHANGE.
ALTHOUGH LEGISLATURE APPROVED BILL GRANTING FREEHOLD LAND
TO GILBERTESE, THEIR DISTRUST OF GSI SEEMS TO BE SO GREAT
THAT AN EXODUS IS LIKELY. END SUMMARY.

2. PRC VISITORS. TWO OFFICIALS OF PRC EMBASSY IN
CANBERRA SPENT MARCH 5-15 IN SOLOMONS, ENTERING AS TOURISTS
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ON DIPLOMATIC PASSPORTS. LOCAL CHINESE BUSINESSMAN WINSTON
TSHEE HOSTED THEM. WAETA BEN, RECENTLY APPOINTED MINISTER
FOR AGRICULTURE AND LANDS, HOSTED A DINNER FOR THEM ATTENDED
BY CHIEF MINISTER KENILOREA AND FIVE OTHER MINISTERS.
BEN LATER CONFIRMED HE WOULD TRAVEL TO PEKING TO LOOK AT
CHINESE EDUCATION AND AGRICULTURE AND INVESTIGATE
POSSIBILITY OF SCHOLARSHIPS. APART FROM CAUSING

MUCH SPECULATION, VISIT REVIVED SOME ANTI-CHINESE FEELINGS IN HONIARA. (NOTE: EMBOFFS HAVE HEARD IN PAST OF LATENT ANTI-CHINESE FEELINGS, ATTRIBUTED TO SIZEABLE CHINESE COMMERCIAL OPERATIONS.)

3. GILBERTESE LAND PROBLEM. GILBERTESE DISTRUST OF GSI CONTINUED AND SO INGRAINED THAT PLANS FOR MASSIVE EXODUS REGARDLESS OF WHAT GSI DOES RE GRANTING THEM FREEHOLD LAND TITLES (NOTE: LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY APPROVED LAND AND TITLES BILL 1978 IN APRIL, GRANTING GILBERTESE LIVING IN SOLOMON ISLANDS AND WHO HAD FREEHOLD OR EQUIVALENT INTEREST IN LAND ON SEPTEMBER 15, 1977, RIGHT TO KEEP IT. SUCH LAND WILL NOT BE CONVERTED TO FIXED-TERM ESTATE).

4. LABOR. A STRIKE THREAT BY GUADALCANAL PLAINS GENERAL WORKERS UNION (GPGWU) WON IMPROVED PAY AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE LARGE U.S.-OWNED BREWERS SOLOMONS ASSOCIATES LTD. SOLOMON ISLANDS GENERAL WORKERS UNION (SIGWU) HAS BECOME VIRTUALLY MORIBUND, WITH ONLY 240 PAID MEMBERS REMAINING. AS RESULT OF GPGWU SUCCESS, WORKERS IN OTHER SECTORS ARE CONSIDERING FORMING THEIR OWN UNIONS.

5. WESTERN SECESSION. WESTERN DISTRICT SECESSIONISTS CONTINUE UNCERTAIN AND INDECISIVE. MORE ACTIVE SECESSIONISTS CAN BE EXPECTED TO WORK WITH OPPOSITION PARTY PEOPLE IN CONFIDENTIAL

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HOPE OF DEFERRING INDEPENDENCE AND BRINGING ABOUT AN ELECTION (NOTE: SMALL CHANCE).
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